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Congress of the United States
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COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
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• SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND THE ECONOMY
• SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH
• SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

DEMOCRATIC SENIOR WHIP

June 10, 2014

The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator
United States Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

I am writing you today with regard to the San Jacinto Waste Pits, located in Harris County, Texas. I was actively involved in ensuring that this site was designated as a Superfund Site due to the continued release of dioxin contamination into the environment from the Site.

The Waste Pits Site, to this very day, continues to pose a public health threat to the people of Harris County, including those who fish in the area and the public that is exposed through dioxin-impacted seafood that has been sold for commercial use into the human food chain. For these reasons, I continue to work with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to ensure that the Responsible Parties are required to appropriately clean up the dioxin contamination and remove it from the environment. Additionally, I continue to support ongoing efforts at all levels of government to protect the public from exposure to dioxin from the contaminated San Jacinto Waste Pits.

I understand that the EPA's National Remedy Review Board ("NRRB") has scheduled a meeting in July to address recommendations regarding the remedy to be selected for the Waste Pits Site and would like to add my recommendation that the EPA select the remedy that completely removes the dioxin from the Waste Pits and the San Jacinto River.

Specifically, I urge that the NRRB select Alternative 6N from the Draft Feasibility Study, the only alternative that would completely remove the dioxin waste. Alternative 6N would permanently address the continuing potential and actual threat to human health and the environment it poses to Harris County. The San Jacinto River Waste Pits are located in a sensitive marsh, in an underwater and aquatic environment, in submerged sediments, in a major floodplain, and in the direct path of a critical floodwater pathway. The Site is subjected to

frequent and severe impacts from major hurricanes, storms, tidal action, tropical depressions, flooding, and continuing subsidence that are common to this area and the Gulf of Mexico.

Although the EPA issued a Unilateral Administrative Enforcement Order to the Responsible Parties ordering them to install a temporary, interim rock-pile cap to try to contain the dioxin releases on a short-term basis while a permanent remedy was evaluated, even this temporary rock-pile cap was shown to be unable to withstand the existing tidal forces and routine storm events, further demonstrating that an in-situ, or in-place, long-term remedy is not appropriate for the dioxin located at the San Jacinto River Waste Pits.

I am attaching a letter from stakeholder Harris County that provides a more detailed and comprehensive analysis of the reasons that permanent removal of the dioxin contamination should be selected by the NRRB and appreciate the opportunity to bring this important information to your attention. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding this important matter or other issues before the EPA.

Sincerely,



Gene Green
Member of Congress